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D/OPA-81-215
17 April 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
THROUGH : Director, National Foreign Assessment Center
FROM : Helene L. Boatner
Director, Political Analysis
SUBJECT : International Narcotics

1. The attached letter to you from the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics Matters (Tab A) raises a number of issues pertinent to the narcotics collection and analytic effort of CIA and the Community. Mr. Linnemann concludes with specific recommendations concerning the organizational structure within the Intelligence Community. While some clarification of responsibilities and reordering of priorities within the Community may be desirable, two much more fundamental issues need to be addressed first:

--the role of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)

--the overall priority that the US Government accords to foreign intelligence on narcotics.

2. The DEA question is critical and is an unresolved problem of many years' standing. By law, DEA is the "lead agency" in federal narcotics enforcement matters. However, its foreign narcotics intelligence role is less clearly defined. Overseas, DEA collects operational and tactical information leading to the arrest of traffickers as well as information of a strategic, or national-level, nature. The Directorate of Operations concentrates its efforts on information of importance to policymakers on major strategic questions

25X1 [redacted]
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25X1 [redacted] The DCI has the responsibility for coordinating all clandestine foreign intelligence operations, including those in the narcotics field, and CIA has been designated to perform this role on behalf of the DCI. Both organizations are obligated to share their reporting with one another. (Tab B: Memorandum of Understanding: DEA and CIA, 28 August 1978)

3. To date, no executive orders or understandings have been implemented satisfactorily. There is a long and tortured history of difficulties with DEA and predecessor organizations over responsibilities, over the exchange of

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information collected by DEA. A former Attorney General ruled that DEA's overseas activities are not foreign intelligence as defined in E.O. 10236 and DEA hence not a member of the Intelligence Community. (Tab C: Letter from the Attorney General of April 20, 1979)

4. Even if questions of authority and willingness to share information were resolved, we have real doubts about DEA's ability to conduct an effective foreign intelligence operation. It continues to pursue its mandate from the perspective of law enforcement, and its foreign intelligence operations are run by personnel with a law enforcement background. It is geared to immediate interdiction and arrest, and much less to patient development of sources and accumulation of information that would disrupt major trafficking networks and identify the key figures and institutions that need to be immobilized if the US is to reap maximum benefits. Unless DEA's fundamental approach to its overseas mission changes, there is little anyone in CIA or elsewhere can do to improve its effectiveness as an intelligence organization.

5. The priority question is also a major issue. While Peter Bourne was at the White House, there was a strong central point giving coherent direction to USG programs. Even then, however, the resource commitment to international narcotics matters was relatively small. Stuart Eizenstat subsequently assumed his role, but he had to operate relatively independently. He was pressing for more attention to narcotics matters, but OMB was not willing to make additional resources available. Under the present administration, there is no contact point at the White House to force coordination. Peter Bensinger has not been renominated as Administrator of DEA by the new administration, and rumors are rampant that he will be replaced and/or that the role of the FBI will be enlarged at the expense of DEA. There is no nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics Matters (the role Mr. Linnemann is filling on an acting basis). The upshot is that various US departments and agencies are establishing their own priorities and doing whatever seems sensible given their missions and constraints.

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25X1 7. In NFAC, two entities are involved. To draw together all NFAC analytic work on international narcotics, a [redacted] International Narcotics Analytic Center was established in 1979. It is organizationally subordinate to the Office of Political Analysis but is staffed by OPA and the Office of Economic Research and has NFAC-wide responsibilities. The Center produces intelligence analyses, commissions work by analysts elsewhere in NFAC, coordinates overall NFAC research planning on narcotics matters, and serves as a central point of contact for consumers and for the DDO.

25X1 8. The Strategic Narcotics Branch in the Office of Geographic and Societal Research concentrates on assessment of foreign opium production, using an all-source, multidisciplinary approach. [redacted]

25X1 [redacted] The approach has proved very effective. [redacted]

25X1 9. Pleas such as Mr. Linnemann's for increased CIA effort on both collection and analysis on international narcotics have been frequent. They have come from Congress as well as the Executive Branch. The CIA position to date has been that other demands on the Agency for intelligence support to national-level policymakers, the existence of DEA--for which narcotics is the sole priority of over 4,000 employees and a budget of about \$200 million--and the availability of much of the necessary information to overt or Foreign Service collectors dictate a highly selective CIA effort.

10. We understand that you have had at least two meetings with Mr. Bensinger and have asked the Intelligence Community Staff to evaluate Mr. Linnemann's proposals for you. In the absence of any knowledge of your specific objectives, the following recommendations are necessarily tentative:

- The role of the DEA must be clarified. This is a problem for the White House, not the DCI alone. But the DCI can act as a catalyst.
- The priority of international narcotics as an issue for the USG must be determined. Its priority as one of many collection and analysis targets must be established for overt, technical, and clandestine collectors.
- Mechanisms for disseminating information collected by organizations outside the Community (DEA, non-intelligence components of the Department of Defense and Treasury, etc.) must be established.
- A DCI Committee to coordinate collection of narcotics intelligence (Mr. Linnemann's proposal) would be one mechanism for rationalizing collection, but all the committees set up heretofore have proved ineffective in the face of unresolved questions about DEA and about the appropriate priorities.

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- ✓ --An NIO for international narcotics (his other specific proposal) would be an undesirable addition to the confusion that already exists.
- An early meeting involving you and the individuals in CIA who are deeply involved in this issue is highly desirable.
- A subsequent discussion between you and Mr. Linnemann (to which we suggest you also invite Ambassador Stoessel) would be a useful next step.

11. The above has been coordinated with the Directorate of Operations and the Office of Geographic and Societal Research.

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Helene L. Boatner

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